

DOE

BRIEFS

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June 11, 1997

FIRST "MOVIES" MADE AT WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL X-RAY SOURCE

A collaborative research team led by Howard University has taken its first x-ray "movies" at the Advanced Photon Source (APS), a huge doughnut-shaped machine the size of a baseball stadium. The work, performed at DOE's Argonne National Laboratory, involves studying novel materials under real, dynamic conditions. The team demonstrated a new ability to produce movies of structural changes taking place at the atomic scale. Scientists were able to record a series of x-ray diffraction exposures at 30 frames per second. In addition to materials research, the technique has applications in medical and biological research.

The team, one of 15 presently using the APS, is a collaboration of Howard University, the University of Michigan and Lucent Technologies/Bell Laboratories. It was formed five years ago and funded by DOE's Office of Basic Energy Sciences to construct beam lines to use the powerful x-rays from the APS. The engineering, design and construction of the beam lines was carried out at Howard's Beltsville, Md., campus. The beam lines were then installed at the APS. More information on the APS and its research teams is available on the Internet at:

<http://www.aps.anl.gov/welcome.html>

Media Contact: Jeff Sherwood, 202/586-5806

BPA HELPS NEZ PERCE PURCHASE ANCESTRAL LAND

The Nez Perce Tribe will celebrate Thursday, June 12, the return of 10,300 acres of the tribe's ancestral homeland in the Wallowa Valley in northeastern Oregon. The Bonneville Power Administration is funding the purchase of the land from The Trust for Public Lands as mitigation for the loss of wildlife habitat caused by development of the hydropower system in the Columbia River Basin. The tribe has plans to purchase an additional 6,200 acres in the future with funds provided by Bonneville. Media are invited to Thursday's celebration.

Media Contact: Perry Gruber, 503/230-5359

PRELIMINARY NOTICES OF VIOLATION ISSUED AT DOE SITES EA-96-02

The Department of Energy issued Preliminary Notices of Violation to contractors at the Pantex Plant, Amarillo, Tex., and the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site, Colo., for violations of nuclear safety rules in late 1996 and early 1997. DOE Assistant Secretary for

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Environment, Safety and Health Tara O'Toole notified Mason & Hanger Corporation at Pantex and Kaiser-Hill Company, L.L.C. and Rocky Mountain Remediation Services at Rocky Flats via June 6 letters. The violation at Pantex involved the accuracy of records that certify proficiency of weapons dismantlement workers. Records of hours worked were inflated to make it appear that all time requirements were met. The technicians had initially been trained to perform the work so the safety significance was low.

The Rocky Flats violations occurred in late 1996 and early 1997. One was an unauthorized movement of six drums in a room that had special controls to prevent an inadvertent criticality; the second was an incident that resulted in release of radioactive material during environmental remediation of trenches. In the first case, Kaiser-Hill identified the violation, completed evaluations, and identified short and long term corrective actions before the DOE Enforcement Office had completed its investigation. No enforcement action was taken. The second incident resulted in an unintentional release of radioactive material when contaminated drum parts were crushed as part of an environmental remediation job at two Rocky Flats trenches. Initially, the parts were thought to contain only low-level radioactive material. Higher levels were later identified, which should have triggered additional radiological controls. When the job was completed, a small release was discovered. The Preliminary Notices of Violation require that corrective actions be taken to prevent more serious problems from occurring. Future remedial operations will involve greater quantities of nuclear materials. The Preliminary Notices of Violation carry no fine but require responses within 30 days that include corrective actions to prevent recurrence.

Media Contact: Jayne Brady or Anne Elliott, 202/586-5806

ELECTRICITY SPEECH IS AVAILABLE

Secretary of Energy Federico Peña's June 9 remarks to the Edison Electric Institute in Philadelphia, PA, on electricity restructuring in the United States, are available to the media.

Media Contact: Bill Wicker, 202/586-5806

DOE NEWS RELEASES (June 5-11, 1997)

DOE-Sponsored Clean Coal Project Wins Power Magazine 1997 Award

Media Contacts: Jacqueline Johnson, 202/586-5806, Hattie Wolfe, 202/586-6503

U.S. Department of Energy To Use New Environmentally Friendly Fluorescent Lamps

Media Contact: Hope Williams, 202/586-5806

Letter to Citizens/Executive Summary of Action Plan for Improved Management of Brookhaven National Laboratory

Media Contact: Jayne Brady or Jeff Sherwood, 202/586-5806